

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 8297

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CY, GR

SUBJECT: CYPRUS

1. I INVITED FONMIN BITSIOS AND HIS ACTING DEPUTY, AMBASSADOR TZOUNIS, FOR INFORMAL LUNCH TODAY. MY POLITICAL COUNSELOR WAS ALSO PRESENT. LUNCHEON PROVIDED OCCASION FOR INFORMAL, PERSONAL CONVERSATION, MOST OF WHICH COVERED FAMILIAR GROUND PREVIOUSLY REPORTED.

2. IN CONNECTION WITH CONVERSATION ON VARIOUS CONGRATULATORY MESSAGES TO PM CARAMANLIS UPON HIS SUCCESS IN NOVEMBER 17 ELECTIONS FONMIN VOLUNTEERED THAT PRIME MINISTER WILSON HAD SENT PAGE AND A HALF MESSAGE, FIRST PARAGRAPH OF WHICH CONVEYED APPROPRIATE CONGRATULATIONS, AFTER WHICH FOLLOWED HALF A DOZEN PARAGRAPHS URGING PM TO ACCEPT BIZONAL FEDERATION FOR CYPRUS. TZOUNIS ADDED WRPLY THAT A "CERTAIN POLITICAL LEADER" (CARAMANLIS) IN ATHENS HAD BEEN VISIBLY IRRITATED BY THIS PART OF MESSAGE. BITSIOS EXPLAINED THAT THIS WAS REASON ATHENS NEWS AGENCY HAD NOT PUBLISHED TEXT OF WILSON MESSAGE. (MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT FORD AND SECRETARY KISSINGER HAVE NOT YET BEEN RELEASED BY GOG EITHER.)

3. IN ENSUING CONVERSATION BOTH BITSIOS AND TZOUNIS REITERATED THAT GOG COULD ACCEPT CONCEPT OF GEORGRAPHICAL FEDERATION FOR CYPRUS BUT NOT ON BIZONAL BASIS. IN PARTICULAR, BITSIOS STRESSED THAT MAKARIOS WOULD NEVER ACQUIESCE IN SUCH AN OUTCOME, WHATEVER POSITION CLERIDES MIGHT TAKE, AND FORMER'S VIEW WAS CRITICAL
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BOTH ON CYPRUS AND FOR GOG. IN THIS CONNECTION BITSIOS

NOTED THAT ALTHOUGH GREEKS HAD NOT BRIEFED EITHER CLERIDES OR MAKARIOS ON HIS OWN BREAKFAST CONVERSATION WITH THE SECRETARY IN ROME, REPORT OF CONVERSATION BETWEEN SECRETARY AND MAKARIOS IN WASHINGTON THAT GOG HAD RECEIVED BOTH THROUGH CLERIDES AND AMB. ALEXANDRAKIS INDICATED THAT BOTH MAKARIOS AND BITSIOS HAD RESPONDED TO SECRETARY'S INQUIRIES ON BIZONAL FEDERATION IN ALMOST EXACTLY SAME NEGATIVE LANGUAGE AS IF THEY HAD COORDINATED REPLIES.

4. BOTH BITSIOS AND TZOUNIS WERE UNEQUIVOCAL IN AFFIRMING THAT GOG, IRRESPECTIVE OF FACT THAT COUP AGAINST MAKARIOS WAS PRODUCT OF JUNTA, FULLY UNDERSTOOD THAT A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT ON ISLAND COULD NOT BE AS FAVORABLE FROM STANDPOINT OF GREEK CYPRIOT COMMUNITY OR GOG AS IT WAS BEFORE JULY 15. THEY BELIEVED MAKARIOS ALSO FULLY APPRECIATED THIS. ONLY CAUTIONARY QUALIFICATION WE WOULD PLACE ON THEIR COMMENT IS THAT A MORE POLITICALLY ORIENTED FOREIGN MINISTER, IN CONTRAST TO THESE TWO OFFICERS, MIGHT FIND IT DIFFICULT TO BE AS OPENLY REALISTIC IN ACCEPTING FACTS OF LIFE AS THEY NOW EXIST ON CYPRUS.

5. I TOOK OCCASION TO RAISE QUESTION OF TIMING OF MAKARIOS' VISIT TO ATHENS. BITSIOS WAS UNABLE TO GIVE ME ANY PRECISE DATE, BUT HE CONFIRMED THAT HE HAD ALREADY LET MAKARIOS KNOW THAT HIS OWN ANNOUNCED INTENTION TO COME AROUND THE END OF THIS WEEK WOULD NOT BE SATISFACTORY SINCE NEW GOG MUST FIRST BE FORMED AND AT WORK.
KUBISCH

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